

REMARKS

Claims 12, 14-18, 20-23, 30, 32-35 and 43-72 are pending in the present application. Claims 13, 19, and 31 have been cancelled and claims 43-72 have been added by amendment.

In the office action mailed September 9, 2004 (the "Office Action") claims 12 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,128,207 to Lien et al. (the "Lien patent") and U.S. Patent No. 6,349,049 to Schoy (the "Schoy patent"). Claims 13-23 and 31-35 were objected to by the examiner, and it is assumed that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim.

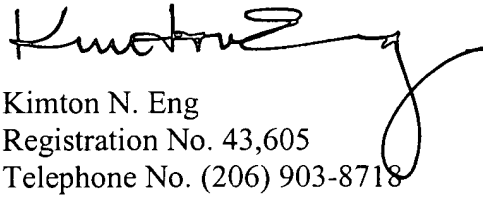
Claims 12 and 30 have been amended to include the limitations of allowable claims 13 and 31. Consequently, claims 12 and 30 are in condition for allowance. Claims 14-17, which depend from claim 12, and claims 32-35, which depend from claim 30, are similarly in condition for allowance based on their dependency from a respective allowable base claim. The amendment made to claims 12 and 30 have been made to expedite the allowance of allowable subject matter. Claim 18 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 19 so that the format of claim 18 is consistent with that of claims 12 and 30. The amendments, however, should not be interpreted as reflecting Applicant's belief that the subject matter of the unamended claims is unpatentable. Moreover, Applicant has not addressed the merits of the Examiner's rejection of the claims, or whether the Examiner's characterizations of the cited references are accurate. Therefore, the presumption that Applicant has tacitly acknowledged the merit of the rejections or that the references cited by the Examiner are relevant to the patentability of the present invention should not be made.

New claims 43-72 have been added to claim the allowable subject matter of claims 14, 17, 20, 23, 32, and 35, along with respective dependent claims directed to the subject matter of claims 13-17, 19-23, and 31-35. Support for the subject matter of claims 43-72 can be found in the specification, including the figures and originally filed claims. No new matter has been added by claims 43-72.

All of the claims remaining in the application are now clearly allowable.
Favorable consideration and a timely Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosures:

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Fee Transmittal Sheet (+ copy)

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